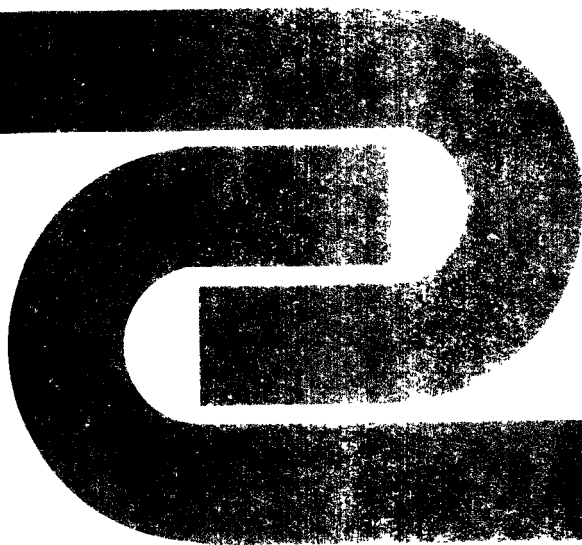


ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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# **BULLETIN**



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# I

## 198th PLENARY SESSION

The 198th Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was held at the Committee building in Brussels, on 26 and 27 May 1982. The Committee Chairman, Mr Tomás Roseingrave, presided.

The Session was attended by the President of the European Parliament, Mr Dankert.

### DEBATE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE ESC

#### Resumé of Mr Roseingrave's speech

In his speech welcoming Mr Dankert to the Plenary Session, Mr Roseingrave, the Committee's President, recalled the progress made over the years in the relations between the two institutions and described the present links and the cooperation between them which had now been put into effect. He also expressed the hope of achieving greater cooperation between the Parliament and the Committee with the aim of expediting and improving the quality of the Community work. He then referred to the work going on within the institutional committee of the European Parliament and recalled the four Opinions delivered by the Committee on institutional subjects over the years.

In all these four Opinions the Committee claims the following for itself: firstly independence, (which means autonomy in respect of its Rules of Procedure and its budget) to be crowned by a change of name to Economic and Social *Council* and promotion to an institution; secondly, a key position within the advisory network of economic and social interest groups and coordination of the various general or sectoral advisory bodies, combined with mandatory consultation of the Committee before any new body is set up; thirdly, consultation of the Committee on major economic and social strategies before the final stage of the preparation in the Commission; and finally, the right to be kept informed of action taken on its Opinions.

But it must also be recalled that the Economic and Social Committee has not only claimed improvements for itself. Over the years, and

indeed in all the above-mentioned Opinions, the Economic and Social Committee has backed and supported the strengthening of the influence of the Parliament. The Committee has underlined that the Parliament should fully exercise its authority in budgetary matters. It has stressed that Parliament in major debates must prepare the policy decision of the Community and it has also emphasized that it should have legislative powers.

This then would give us a long-term framework of possible relations. With this kind of perspective the mutual responsibilities of our institutions would be clear. The European Parliament would be able to fulfil its role as a legislative body. The Economic and Social Committee would represent the consultative element of the Community decision-making. Between the two institutions there would be a clear division of the respective tasks which at the same time would be complementary; I am convinced, President, that both our institutions could benefit from such a form of work sharing, and I can assure you of the full support of our Committee if the reflection which is undertaken in your institution were to be directed in this sense.

### **Resumé of Mr Dankert's speech**

The President of the European Parliament, Mr Dankert, thought that it was high time for relations between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee to be strengthened, for the problems facing the Community - unemployment, inflation - were economic and social and not of an institutional nature. Cooperation was thus necessary in order that joint pressure could be exerted on the Commission and the Council. The latter were clearly finding it very hard to resolve the difficulties, and solutions would have to be put forward by political and social bodies, including the Economic and Social Committee.

The Treaties had to function again, the Commission had to regain its position at the helm, the Council had to take decisions and the European Parliament's budgetary and legislative powers had to be strengthened. The ESC's consultative role would then come much better to the fore. However, institutional improvements were pointless without economic and social progress.

On the subject of co-operation between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, Mr Dankert stated that there were clear reasons why the two institutions should work closely together. There was no dialectical opposition between the Parliament and the ESC. And the Parliament had no control over the Committee, even though it had a say in the Committee's budget. Undue caution in the establishment of contacts was thus out of place. It was important to pool

research, for it was inadmissible that so much time, grey matter, energy and money were expended on separate fact-finding activities. He considered in this context that closer co-operation between the respective Secretariats was necessary.



From left to right: Mr Louet, Secretary General of the ESC, Mr Roseingrave, President of the ESC and Mr Dankert, President of the European Parliament.

In conclusion, Mr Dankert expressed the hope that there would be vigorous co-operation between the Parliament and the Committee.

### **Resumé of speech by Mr Staratzke, Chairman of Group I (Employers)**

Speaking on behalf of the Employers' Group, its Chairman, Mr Staratzke, deplored the fact that the European Community was currently facing the most difficult economic situation which it had encountered since its inception. He underlined the need for the problems to be tackled at an institutional level and at other levels. After reviewing the institutional relations between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, he went on to make the following statement:

"Reforms have to be made in a number of fields, such as agriculture and finance. Such reforms will not, however, be enough in themselves to change the European Community. What is needed is a new political impulse - the Community needs to have firm political pillars in addition to the economic pillars. In my estimation the initiative of Foreign Ministers Colombo and Genscher with regard to the establishment of a European Union has come at the right moment. In a period in which people are growing weary with the Community this initiative should breathe new life into the idea of unifying Europe and help to improve the structure of the Community.

In order to make the Community's decision-making process more democratic we will also have to strengthen the European Parliament's collaborating and monitoring role. Only after this step has been taken can the second direct election of the Parliament's members be held with a prospect of success and hopefully with a turn-out which gives the Parliament real legitimacy, rather than the very poor level of voting which occurred in some Member States at the first direct election.

The citizens of the Community must also recognize and experience the advantages which the work of European unification provides for them. The Community must demonstrate that it is capable of doing something more than just producing tons of Directives and Regulations and that it can in fact offer practical and recognizable benefits to all the citizens of the Member States."

In conclusion Mr Staratzke warned against judging the Community on the basis of the fact that one State paid in 1,000 million DM more to the Community budget in a given year than it received in benefits. All those payments should be seen as part of a political venture stretching over decades, as the authors of the Treaty of Rome had very clearly recognized. At the present time that venture was regrettably seen by many politicians simply in terms of financial calculations.

### **Resumé of speech by Mr Debunne, Chairman of Group II (Workers)**

Speaking on behalf of the workers' group, its Chairman, Mr Debunne, said that at all its meetings, whether at the European Parliament or at the Economic and Social Committee, a European approach was vital. Once back on home territory, we tended to become nationalistic. The reason for such a tendency was that we were not properly served by the European institutions. At the moment, the European Parliament did not have any legislative powers, and the voice of the Committee did not carry enough weight. There was no political democracy on the European level, and no social democracy within the



Committee. It was impossible to negotiate collectively at European level. If the current situation continued, how could we possibly expect the public to take an interest in our affairs? These two assemblies were convinced that the prime concern must be to tackle economic and social problems, to defeat unemployment and to strengthen democracy. If the EP and the ESC joined forces and shared the same objectives, together with the economic and social groups, if we pursued the same policies, and recommended the same solutions to the Council and the Commission, we could arrive at a positive outcome. We could make a joint appeal to public opinion. We should unite in the search for solutions to the main problems facing Europe, and we should adopt the same attitude and plan of campaign. This was the spirit in which we should cooperate.

### **Resumé of speech by Mrs Strobel, Chairman of Group III (Various Interests)**

The Chairman of the Various Interests Group, Mrs Strobel, stressed that the Economic and Social Committee represented an important element in the European institutional machinery.

"We believe that the specialist knowledge and expertise gathered together in this Committee by the representatives of the social and economic groups of the Community, and the importance of the major organizations from which we come, gives us both the ability and the duty to weigh up what is necessary and sensible in the most important areas of the Community's work. In the Committee this is a particularly special task.

Now as ever, we try to reach agreement on difficult problems. However, we do not always succeed. This is understandable, in a time of economic and financial difficulties, but even so we do not wish to lose sight of the goal of securing the best possible quality of life. In the Economic and Social Committee the drive to support European solutions is dominant to a high degree.

In the ESC we have majorities and minorities. However, they do not mirror national viewpoints or interests, but the interests of the groups which we represent, the people and the economic and social groups who are our reason for being here. And this is quite right. The viewpoints of the inhabitants of the ten Member States are always championed by the groups and groupings. And we feel that the economic and social groups which we come from are a vital component of European integration. These groups need a European policy. And this applies not only to the big employers' and workers' organizations, but also to the various interests which make up Group III".

Mrs Strobel stressed that the Economic and Social Committee was able to enhance the debates in the Parliament, and that the Committee's Opinions represented a knowledgeable addition to the views which the Parliament represented in the public interest. She pointed out that the ESC did much to stimulate progress in the Community and that through Own-initiative Opinions it drew specific and important problems to the attention of the Commission.

## ADOPTION OF OPINIONS

### 1. SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (own-initiative Opinion)

*"The promotion of the small and medium-sized enterprises sector in the European Community"*

#### Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>

Tax relief, the lessening of red tape, a better distribution of social charges, an improvement in information services and more inter-firm cooperation, are the main keys to stimulating small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in the European Community. This is the main thrust of the Opinion which the Economic and Social Committee adopted by a large majority with three votes against and 2 abstentions.

An overall strategy for helping SMEs depends on the following:

- The abolition of excessive paperwork and red tape.
- The availability of advisory services before and during the setting up of a new enterprise, such services being discontinued only when the new enterprise has been consolidated.
- The gearing of the various EEC financial instruments to the specific needs of small and medium-sized enterprises. A system should be devised whereby the Community can provide deficiency guarantees.
- Tax relief. To improve the position of small and medium-sized enterprises with regard to internally-generated capital, the Committee proposes that investment reserves and retained profits receive special treatment. The Committee advocates the general introduction of "carry-back" of losses.
- the possibility of securing a better distribution of social security charges within the economy;

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 474/82.

- the strengthening of cooperation between SMEs: the Committee argues for the speedy adoption of the regulation on the European Cooperation Grouping; the creation of a European law on private limited liability companies; the expansion of relevant Commission departments; and, finally, financial contributions from the Community to the cost of holding trade fairs and exhibitions;
- the access of SMEs to the latest technological advances in the field of computerization so as to enable them to obtain information more easily.
- concrete amendments to Community directives so as to improve the access of SMEs to public supply contracts;
- effectively tackling the black economy, which must become a centrepiece of the Community's policy to help SMEs. In the Committee's view, if the fight to stamp out the black economy is to be successful, the Community must call on national Governments to work together with the two sides of industry to draw up collective-bargaining or legislative provisions to discourage the phenomenon.
- the expansion of the Community's regional-policy financing possibilities so as to promote the specific role of SMEs in the endogenous development of the community's backward regions.

Finally, the Committee supports the European Parliament's proposal to proclaim 1983 the "Year of Craft Trades and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises". It therefore proposes the organization in January 1983 of a preparatory conference at which the Commission, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee will work out an overall policy for helping SMEs in the Community.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr van Campen (Netherlands - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Kolbenschlag (Germany - Various Interests).*

## **2. 3rd ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

***"Draft European Communities Action Programme on the Environment (1982-1986)"***

### **Gist of the proposal**

Primarily concerned at the outset with the control of pollution and nuisance, the Community's action on the environment has gradually evolved into an overall, preventive policy designed to incorporate the environmental dimension in both general and sectoral policy.

While the two earlier programmes were remedial in character, the aim of the third programme is rather to develop a coherent framework for a preventive environment policy.

The Commission takes the view that this preventive approach could lead to a considerable reduction in overall economic costs and to positive measures in support of economic development.

At a time when the Community's economic situation is deteriorating the question arises as to whether the Community's environment policy should be modified.

The Commission takes the view that environment policy is a structural policy which must be continued irrespective of short-term cyclical fluctuations, in order to prevent natural resources from being seriously despoiled and to ensure that future development potential is not wasted. The Commission also believes that environment policy can help to create new jobs by promoting and stimulating advance technology industries; it is an important element in industrial innovation and can thus improve the competitiveness of the Community's economy.

Public opinion is still very concerned about environmental matters and, despite current economic difficulties, continues to support measures to protect the environment.

The Five-Year Programme contains four main sections:

Development of an overall strategy covering research, the dissemination and accessibility of knowledge, and procedures ensuring that environmental factors are taken into account in planning and decision-making processes.

The Commission is proposing that Environmental Impact Assessment should gradually be introduced into the planning and preparation of activities such as public and private development projects, regional planning, new products and technologies, etc.

Prevention and reduction of pollution and nuisance in the various components of the environment:

- fresh water and sea water (dangerous substances, oil spills);
- the atmosphere (air quality standards for nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, fluorine, cadmium and mercury);
- chemicals (lists of dangerous substances; international agreements of toxic substances);
- noise (the promotion of quieter products; relationship between noise abatement and energy saving; the effects of mechanical vibration on the Community's cultural heritage);

- pollution and nuisance associated with waste (the processing and harmless disposal of waste; additional measures for toxic and dangerous waste).

Protection and rational management of land, the environment and natural resources:

- rational management of land (landscapes, agricultural land, protected areas, coastal regions and mountainous areas);
- conservation of flora and fauna (conservation of habitats, monitoring the collection of wild flora and fauna, monitoring trade in endangered species);
- rational management of water resources;
- waste management (prevention; reduction in the quantity of non-recoverable waste arising; waste recovery, recycling and re-use; harmless disposal of non-recovered waste).

Action within international organizations and cooperation with non-member countries.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

Environmental policy should be coordinated with other Community policies with a view to developing an overall strategy: this key principle, among others, underlies the Opinion adopted unanimously by the Economic and Social Committee.

After reviewing the Community's work in the environment sphere during the first two Action Programmes (1973-1981), the ESC came to the conclusion that, though the Community had adopted a number of legislative texts over this period, further progress could have been achieved, had the Council been more prompt in approving some of the proposals submitted by the Commission.

In its Opinion the ESC criticizes the "laissez-aller" attitude of those Member States which have failed to incorporate Community decisions into national legislation.

It also stresses the need for a Commission Report on Community action in environmental matters with a view to determining an order of priority for the measures to be taken in each field.

The ESC agrees with the Commission that environment policy should be pursued regardless of short-term cyclical fluctuations. However, certain factors must be borne in mind, namely cost-

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 478/82.

effectiveness, informing of the general public, the regional and local context, the role of associations and social groups and industrial innovation strategy.

The ESC endorses the 3rd Draft Action Programme, subject to the following comments:

- care must be taken in implementing the “polluter pays” principle as it is currently conceived;
- the Community must steer clear of measures that could encourage firms to move to other countries which apply less stringent environment protection standards;
- special attention must be given to the following: reduction of land deterioration; preparation of R & D programmes, support for wider use of clean technologies; appropriate staff training; incentives to promote savings in energy and raw materials while taking into consideration the adverse effects of certain alternatives to oil; methods of curbing motor vehicle pollution;
- new sources of financing must be found for the Environment Fund proposed by the Commission; industry should be offered financial incentives to introduce anti-pollution equipment;
- the Environment Programme should be extended to encompass (a) forests, flora and fauna and (b) the Community’s architectural and artistic heritage;
- the international dimension to the Community’s environmental policy should be highlighted.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, under the chairmanship of Miss Roberts (United Kingdom - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Mills (United Kingdom - Employers).*

### **3. ENERGY STRATEGY AND ENERGY PRICING** **(own-initiative Opinion)**

***“Communications from the Commission to the Council concerning the development of an energy strategy for the Community and on energy pricing - policy and transparency”***

#### **Background information**

The Commission published a report on 20 October 1981 entitled “The Development of an Energy Strategy for the Community”. The report took the form of a Communication to the Council and was issued as COM(81) 540 final.

Also, because of the special importance of pricing in a long-term energy strategy, the Commission drew up — as the first of a number of proposals on individual aspects of energy policy — a separate Communication to the Council entitled “Energy Pricing — Policy and Transparency”, incorporating a draft Council Resolution (COM(81) 539 final of 13 October 1981).

It is on these documents that the Committee has given its Opinion. The gist of the documents is as follows:

**Energy Strategy:** This sets out five priorities for Community action in the energy field:

- adequate level of investment
- common approach to pricing and taxation
- measures of solidarity to avoid market instability
- common R & D policies
- common external relations policies

**Energy Pricing.** Energy pricing has a vital role to play in promoting structural change in the European economy. The Commission's document stresses in particular two vital elements: prices should reflect the trends on energy markets, and prices should be transparent. But these elements are hampered by market imperfections, and it is uncertain how far these market imperfections can be overcome by action at Community level.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

The European Community's determination to come up with an effective energy policy must on no account be undermined by the current fall in the price of oil. This view was voiced by the Economic and Social Committee in its Opinion adopted by 71 votes in favour, 28 against and 10 abstentions.

As regards the energy strategy's general objective, the Committee reiterates its view that the Community bodies must do everything in their power to accelerate the desired convergence of national efforts in the energy sector.

Investment in energy projects, the Committee re-affirms, is impeded in the majority of the Member States by public misgivings. It proposes that the Commission should reach agreement with the Member States on as uniform as possible outline conditions for authorization procedures.

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 472/82.

The Committee also welcomes the initiative envisaged by the Commission for informing the public not only of the potential uses of the various energy sources but also of the risks involved.

The current standstill or even decrease in energy prices must not lead to a continuing wait-and-see attitude regarding energy conservation, the more rational use of energy and the substitution of other energy sources for oil with its political uncertainties - rather, special efforts in the energy policy field are needed to overcome this wait-and-see attitude. The Commission should put forward concrete proposals to this end as soon as possible, so that the Community will not become more dependent on oil again when there is an economic recovery.

With regard to prices and taxation, the Committee is pleased to note that the Commission and the Council will henceforth be attaching special importance to energy policy in the Community's energy strategy. Price and tax policy plays of course an important role, but it is by no means the sole or decisive factor. It is at least equally important that substitutes for oil be made effectively available in sufficient quantity and above all that there be sufficient willingness to invest in substitution. Satisfactory coordination in the energy sector cannot be achieved independently of a general alignment of national economic and social policies. The Committee would therefore warn against unrealistic wishful thinking.

As regards the principles governing pricing, the Committee agrees with the Commission that

- consumer prices must allow adequate investment in energy supplies and induce consumers to use energy efficiently and hence must not be kept at an artificially low level;
- pre-tax differences in energy prices within the Community are considered to be warranted insofar as they are due to competitive advantages;
- It is necessary to reject price differences not justified by such factors, particularly those caused by different levels of taxation, insofar as these are not necessary in order that the different degrees of shortage of primary energy sources may be made sufficiently clear.

The Committee reiterates its misgivings about the use of fiscal measures to influence energy decisions; such measures can easily lead to distortions of competition, increased inflation and serious disadvantages for particular groups of consumers — both private and industrial; this must be avoided at all costs.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions under the chairmanship of Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Zünkler (Germany - Employers).*



#### 4. ROLE FOR COAL

*"Commission Communication to the Council concerning the role for coal in Community energy strategy"*

##### Gist of the Commission's document

This Communication follows on from the Commission's 1981 Communication to the Council on the Development of an Energy Strategy for the Community (doc. COM(81) 540 final) - on which the Section is currently drafting an own-initiative Opinion. In that Communication the Commission emphasized the need to reduce the Community's dependence upon oil by positive measures to encourage both more rational use of energy and more diversified energy supplies.

Coal has a very important role to play in this context. The world's reserves are large, on some estimates four times those of oil and gas combined.

As a result of this Communication, the Commission hopes that the Council will consider sympathetically the coal-related proposals in its Communication to the Council on Investment in the Rational Use of Energy (doc. COM(82) 24 final) and adopt certain clearly expressed conclusions.

This Communication concludes by, inter alia, re-affirming that the substitution of oil by coal needs to be accelerated; that improving coal price transparency will help achieve that end; that Member State Governments should encourage investment in the conversion or re-conversion of oil-fired installations to coal in general industry, in district heating schemes and in public buildings; that a Community research and development programme in view of improved methods for the use of coal be financed by the Community's general budget.

##### Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>

In its Opinion, adopted by 62 votes in favour with 1 abstention, the Committee favours a strengthening of the role of home-produced coal, even though oil prices are falling at the moment. This is necessary if complex decisions on a future policy for coal are to be taken.

However, whilst agreeing with the Commission on the need to promote investment for the conversion of oil-fired plant to coal, the Committee warns strongly of the dangers of producer and consumer

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 471/82.

subsidies overlapping. The granting of subsidies in both fields leads to distortions of competition within the Community, and should be confined to the production sector.

The Committee endorses the Commission's view that Community coal production is the best insurance against adverse price developments on the world market and the most effective weapon for dealing with OPEC's price whims. Since energy supplies have to meet conflicting requirements - on the one hand, reasonable prices, on the other, the greatest possible security of supply - it is necessary, in the Committee's view, to agree on the need for a coal production capacity to be maintained in the Community for strategic reasons.

The Committee says that the document under review does not contain any elements which could be used to evaluate the impact on employment; such an evaluation could influence the distribution of support between coal mining proper and the structural and industrial changes needed for the utilization of coal.

On the question of coal imports, the Committee considers that the Community must state clearly that these are permissible only to the extent that the Community's coal requirements exceed the domestic production capacity needed for strategic reasons. Moreover, the Committee thinks that international trade in coal is the best means of ensuring optimum supplies of imported coal for the Community. These imports must not be impeded by Community or national import arrangements.

Nonetheless, the Committee feels that an appropriate source of imports is to be found in some of the ACP countries. Community resources should be concentrated in those countries.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions under the chairmanship of Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Zünkler (Germany - Employers).*

## **5. OILS AND FATS/OLIVE OIL**

***"Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation N° 136/66/EEC on the establishment of a common organization of the market in oils and fats"***

### **Gist of the Commission document**

The Commission is proposing an amendment to Regulation N° 136/66/EEC to the effect that "the relationship at the consumer level between the price of olive oil and prices of competing seed oils should not exceed 2:1".

This amendment should, at the latest, enter into force at the start of the transitory period decided for olive oil.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted by 56 votes to 35 with 13 abstentions, the Committee says it feels that it would be more productive to maintain the level of consumption in traditional areas than to try to win over customers with different eating habits to olive oil. Though the Committee accepts the 2:1 price ratio between olive oil and seed oils which the proposed regulation seeks to introduce, this ratio is seen not as a rigid criterion but as a point of departure for achieving the most satisfactory balance, if necessary in stages. Care should also be taken, when granting consumer aid at the wholesale stage, to ensure that such aid goes entirely to the consumer. Finally the Committee urges the Commission to launch a research programme to determine (a) who uses the various types of oil, (b) what they are employed for, and (c) why other oils are used instead of olive oil.

In recapitulating its earlier stands on this issue and stressing the social implications, the Committee points out that the proposed regulation cannot, on its own, solve the problems of the olive oil sector, either now or in the future. These problems are exacerbated by the absence of a common oils and fats policy.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Agriculture under the chairmanship of Mr Emo Capodilista (Italy - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Paggi (Italy - Employers).*

## **6. AIRBORNE NOISE — HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES**

***"Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the airborne noise emitted by household appliances"***

### **Gist of the Commission's proposal**

The basic aim of the draft Directive is to reduce the noise level of domestic electrical appliances in accordance with the objectives of the Community's environmental programme.

The Commission considers that this aim can best be achieved by urging manufacturers to inform consumers of the noise levels of their products rather than by imposing noise limits.

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 475/82.

In order to avoid the risk of technical barriers to trade in this field it is proposed that the methods for measuring and verifying the noise levels be aligned.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted by 68 votes in favour, 2 against and 8 abstentions, the Committee declares it welcomes this Directive as a first step towards the reduction of noise levels, but considers that this initial voluntary labelling phase will have to be followed by a second mandatory phase, leading finally to a third phase in which noise limits are laid down and then gradually lowered.

The Committee notes that this is an outline directive, and that implementing directives for each family of appliances will be drawn up, beginning with vacuum cleaners, dishwashers and washing machines. It calls on the Commission to draw up a priority list for other appliances.

The Committee considers that the relevant information on noise levels must be affixed to each appliance in a clearly visible position, and points out that the following factors must be taken into consideration in drawing up the implementing directives: adequate checking arrangements, penalties for non-compliance, the formulation of standards, and costs.

It further considers that all parties concerned - governments, manufacturers and consumers - must be consulted and involved in the preparation of standards and the drawing up of implementing directives.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for the Environment, Public Health and Consumers Affairs under the chairmanship of Miss Roberts (United Kingdom - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Hilkens (Netherlands - Various Interests).*

## **7. OCCASIONAL COACH AND BUS SERVICES (ASOR)**

***"Proposal for a Council Decision concluding the agreement on the international carriage of passengers by road by means of occasional coach and bus services (ASOR)"***

### **Gist of the Commission proposal**

Council Regulation N° 117/66/EEC of 28 July 1966<sup>(2)</sup> on the introduction of common rules for the international carriage of passen-

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 473/82.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No. L 147 of 9.8.1966, page 2688.

gers by coach and bus states in Article 4 that "the Community shall enter into any negotiations with third countries which may be found necessary for the purpose of implementing this Regulation".

After common rules for shuttle services and regular services had been laid down in Council Regulations Nos. 516/72 and 517/72 of 28 February 1972<sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission was authorized by a Council Decision of 1975 to negotiate the conclusion of an agreement establishing uniform rules for the international carriage of passengers by road by means of occasional coach and bus services.

The negotiations with third countries started on 11 March 1976.

These third countries, which are all members of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), are: Austria, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

The ASOR Agreement is only for vehicles suitable for carrying more than nine persons, including the driver.

The main aim of the Agreement is to eliminate the differences between the laws governing occasional international services by the contracting parties and thereby to make it easier to operate such services.

In short, the conclusion of the ASOR Agreement is the first step towards closer co-operation between the parties concerned and is hence of special political significance.

The proposal which empowers the Council to sign this Agreement on the Community's behalf, is based on Article 75 of the Treaty. Consultation of the Economic and Social Committee is therefore mandatory.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(2)</sup>**

In its Opinion the Committee unanimously endorses the Commission's proposal. It would urge the Commission and Council to make every effort to get Yugoslavia - an important country for cross-frontier occasional passenger transport - to accede to this agreement, too.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications under the chairmanship of Mrs Weber (Germany - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Schneider (Luxembourg - Workers).*

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No. L 57 of 20.3.1972, pages 13 and 19.

<sup>(2)</sup> Doc. CES 470/82.

## 8. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION/EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES

*"Proposal for a Council Decision on the collection of information concerning the activities of road hauliers participating in the carriage of goods to and from certain non-Member countries"*

### Gist of the Commission's proposal

The problem caused by the activities of road hauliers from certain State-trading countries in Eastern Europe has been under examination for some time in the Community. This problem has been examined on several occasions by the Council, the Commission, the Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. For example, in its Opinion on the EEC's transport problems with East European countries, adopted at its 153rd Plenary Session held on 23 and 24 November 1977, the Economic and Social Committee concluded that road haulage is affected by the expansion of the Eastern bloc countries' share of traffic, which is threatening the survival of Western operators.

Consequently, the activities of the road hauliers from certain State-trading countries in Eastern Europe and the imbalance in road traffic relations between Member States and these countries have been under detailed examination by the Commission.

The basic problem is that road hauliers from Member States and Eastern bloc countries have unbalanced shares of bilateral East-West traffic.

Although road haulage does not as yet account for a large part of the total goods traffic between Community countries and Eastern Europe, it is increasing steadily in terms of tonnage and as a percentage of total traffic. The percentage of East-West traffic accounted for by Community carriers varies considerably from one route to another but is generally far less than 50%.

In competing with Community hauliers, hauliers from State-trading countries resort to methods to which Member States' operators have no effective commercial answer, however efficient they may be.

Since all Member States are in the same situation and all their national road haulage industries are suffering alike there is a clear case for preparing action at Community level.

The Commission has therefore come to the conclusion that the activities of hauliers from State-trading countries should be monitored at Community level with a view to putting Member States in a better position to respond to the threat directed against their national road haulage industries by carriers from Eastern bloc countries (USSR,

Poland, German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania).

The Commission is proposing that each Member State should take all the necessary steps to collect the information specified in the proposal's Appendix I as of 1 January 1983.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In an Opinion which it adopted unanimously the Committee unreservedly endorses the Commission proposal. It represents a first step in the proposed Community action and it trusts that the Community will, in future, endeavour to protect the legitimate rights of Community road hauliers when concluding trade agreements with state-trading countries.

The Committee would draw particular attention to the need to ensure, with respect to transport, mandatory observance of these agreements in accordance with the terms of CIF (cost, insurance and freight), thereby enabling Community road hauliers to take part in haulage between the Community and state-trading countries.

*This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications under the chairmanship of Mrs Weber (Germany - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Renaud (France - Employers).*

## **9. IMPORT/EXPORT DUTIES**

***"Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 1430/79 on the repayment or remission of import or export duties"***

### **Gist of the Commission's proposal**

Experience acquired since the entry into force of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1430/79 has shown that there may be justification for granting the repayment or remission of import duties in certain cases where the circumstances are such that no negligence or deception may be attributed to the person concerned and even where a procedural requirement laid down by the said Regulation has not been observed. The Commission's somewhat "technical" proposal aims at amending the existing Regulation in this way.

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 476/82.

### **Gist of the Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In an Opinion, adopted by 57 votes to 12, with 5 abstentions, the Economic and Social Committee endorses the extension of the scope of Regulation EEC No. 1430/79 to cases where procedural requirements governing the repayment or remission of duties have not been observed.

However, some doubts are expressed about the value of amending the second paragraph of Article 20 so that Member States will be able to grant applications for repayment or remission involving sums of less than 10 EUA. As a result of this amendment Member States would be free to act differently and the authorities, who are already overburdened with paperwork, would have a lot of extra work to do without traders enjoying any appreciable benefits.

*The Rapporteur-General for this Opinion was Mr Broicher (Germany - Employers).*

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<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. CES 477/82.



## II

# EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### ACTIVITIES OF THE PRESIDENT

Since the 197th Plenary Session, Mr Roseingrave, the Committee Chairman:

- **visited the United States** from 7 to 15 May in response to the invitations extended to him after his visit there last October. He met representatives of the State Department, trade organizations and the universities.
- held talks on 18 May with **Mr L. Morales, the Portuguese Secretary of State for Employment**, and with **Ambassador Rodrigues Lopes, Head of the Portuguese Mission to the European Communities**;
- on 18 May met **Mr G. Debunne**, the new President of the **European Trade Union Confederation**;
- on 20 and 21 May attended the **Congress of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB)** in Berlin, where he met the new President, **Mr E. Breit**. He also talked to the Mayor of Berlin, **Mr Richard von Weizsäcker**, the Senator responsible for social affairs, **Mr U. Fink**, and the Director of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (**CEDEFOP**), **Mr Faist**.

### III

## NEW CONSULTATIONS

Since May the Council has consulted the Economic and Social Committee on the following points:

***“Proposal for a Council Directive on the Facilitation of formalities and inspections in respect of the carriage of goods between Member States” (COM(82) 189 final).***

***“Proposal for a Council Directive concerning temporary work” (COM(82) 155 final).***

## IV

# PROVISIONAL FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

### JUNE/JULY 1982 PLENARY SESSION

- Mid-1982 economic situation
- Development of the social situation in 1981
- Regional policy memorandum (additional Opinion)
- Merger control
- Textiles origin
- 5th amendment cosmetics
- Rational use of energy
- Energy strategy - nuclear aspects
- Agricultural development in certain regions of Greece
- Controls - agricultural products
- Dehydrated milk
- Hops

#### Own-initiative Opinion

- Report on the administration of financial and technical cooperation in 1980

### SEPTEMBER 1982 PLENARY SESSION

#### Referrals

- Competition in air transport sector
- Competition in maritime transport sector
- Air transport tariffs

#### Own-initiative Opinion

- Common transport policy

#### Information Report

- Fats and oils

**OCTOBER 1982 PLENARY SESSION****Referrals**

- Air pollution by gases from motor vehicles
- Facilitation of border formalities and inspections
- Temporary work

**Own-initiative Opinion**

- Education and teaching

**Information Report**

- Environment and employment

**SUBSEQUENT PLENARY SESSIONS****Referrals**

- XIth Report on competition
- New ACP/EEC cooperation guidelines

**Own-initiative Opinion**

- Problems of border regions in Ireland
- 7th annual ERDF report

**Study**

- Turkey

**Information Report**

- Relations between the Community and the USA

## V

**MEMBERS' NEWS**

Mr Jacques Genton, ex Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, Senator of the French Republic, Mayor of Sancerre and Vice-Chairman of the French Regional Council has just been appointed Grand Officer of the Luxembourg "Ordre du Mérite" by the Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg.



Mr Etienne Davignon, Vice President of the Commission, took part in the Energy Section meeting on 14 May. In the centre Mr Romoli, Section Chairman.



Mrs Maria Weber, Chairman of the Transport Section, welcomes Mr De Croo, Belgian Transport Minister, at the Section meeting on 12 May.

# **PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

## **Periodical**

- Bulletin (monthly publication)

## **General Documentation**

- The Economic and Social Committee (leaflet) (January 1980)
- The Economic and Social Committee (April 1981) (A descriptive brochure) 16 p.
- Annual Report (1981) 96 p. (Ex-33-81)
- Directory — List of Members (January 1981) (CES-81-001)
- The Right of Initiative of the Economic and Social Committee (October 1977) 124 p.

## **Opinions and Studies**

- Aims and Priorities of a Common Research and Development Policy (Study) (January 1982) 59 p. (ESC-82-001)
- Agricultural Aspects of Spain's Entry into the E.C. (Opinion) (February 1982) 107 p. (ESC-81-017)
- The EEC's External Relations — Stocktaking and Consistency of Action (Study) (January 1982) 139 p.
- Genetic Engineering (Colloquy) (October 1981) 120 p. (ESC 81-014)
- Prospects for the '80s (Opinion) (Dec. 1981) (ESC 81-018)
- Economic Pointers for 1982 (Opinion) (August 1981) 32 p. (ESC 81-010)
- Problems of the Handicapped (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 46 p. (ESC 81-013)
- Present situation in the Community's Building Sector (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 24 p. (ESC 81-011)
- Community Competition Policy (Opinion) (ESC 81-008)
- Prevention of Marine Pollution (2 Opinions) (ESC-81-004)
- Working Conditions (September 1980) (Opinion) 61 p. (ESC-80-012)
- Conference on the Enlargement of the European Community — 26 and 27 June 1980 (September 1980) (Extracts) ± 150 p. (ESC-80-009)
- The Organisation and Management of Community R & D (February 1980) (Study) 168 p. (ESC-80-001)
- Agricultural Structures Policy (November 1979) (Opinion) 90 p. (ESC-79-003)
- Enlargement of the European Community Greece-Spain-Portugal (September 1979) (Study) 75 p. (ESC-79-002)
- The Community's Relations with Spain (June 1979) (Study) 112 p. (ESC-79-001)
- Community Shipping Policy Flags of Convenience (April 1979) (Opinion) 170 p.
- Youth Unemployment — Education and Training (November 1978) (5 Opinions) 97 p.
- The Stage reached in aligning labour legislation in the European Community (June 1978) (Documentation) 60 p.
- Employment in Agriculture (June 1978) (Study) 135 p.
- Monetary Disorder (June 1978) (Opinion) 98 p.
- Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in the Community Context (April 1978) (Opinion) 29 p.
- Industrial Change and Employment (November 1977) (Opinion) 98 p.
- EEC's Transport Problems with East European Countries (December 1977) (Opinion) 164 p.
- Community Nuclear Safety Code (July 1977) (Study) 50 p.
- Research and Development (November 1976) (Study) 35 p.
- Systems of Education and Vocational training (August 1976) (Study) 114 p.
- Regional Policy (March 1976) (Opinion) 11 p.
- European Union (July 1975) (Opinion) 33 p.
- Progress Report on the Common Agricultural Policy (February 1975) (Study) 52 p.
- The Situation of Small and Medium-sized Undertakings in the European Community (March 1975) (Study) 69 p.

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